

This guidance document is for informational purposes only and is intended solely to assist applicants in better understanding the NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, and the requirements set forth in the program's Notice of Funding Opportunity (Second TBCP NOFO). This guidance does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, or the specific application requirements set forth in the Second TBCP NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements set forth in the Second TBCP NOFO, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in the guidance below. The Second TBCP NOFO is available at: [ntia-tbcp-round2-nofo.pdf](#).

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program Frequently Asked Questions

The below FAQs are for informational purposes only and are intended solely to assist potential applicants in better understanding the NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program and the application requirements set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this program. The FAQs do not and are not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, or the specific application requirements set forth in the NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements set forth in the NOFO, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in the below FAQs.

Overview and Eligibility

What is the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)? The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program is a nearly \$3 billion grant program and part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Internet for All Initiative. The funds are made available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (\$2 billion) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (\$980 million) (the "Act"). The program supports Tribal governments bringing high-speed Internet to Tribal lands, including telehealth, distance learning, affordability, and digital inclusion initiatives.

What is the funding instrument for this program?

NTIA will award all grants under this program.

How much funding is available in this program?

NTIA will make approximately \$980 million available for federal assistance under the TBCP. Of this, up to \$100 million will be made available for Use and Adoption projects. In accordance with 47 U.S.C. § 1705(c)(3)(A), NTIA will also allocate \$72,715,237.15 to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community for the benefit of Native Hawaiians.

What are the eligible uses of TBCP funds?

The TBCP provides funding for the following purposes:

- Broadband infrastructure deployment, including support for the establishment of carrier neutral submarine cable landing stations;

- Unallowable costs include the deployment of new satellites, dark fiber, or networks duplicating existing Qualifying Broadband Service
- Projects that promote the adoption and use of broadband services, including:
 - affordable broadband programs, such as providing free or reduced-cost broadband
 - service and preventing disconnection of existing broadband service
 - distance learning
 - telehealth
 - digital inclusion efforts (including digital equity planning and workforce development activities)
 - broadband adoption activities

What is the target size of grant awards for projects?

NTIA expects to make awards under this program within the following funding ranges:

- Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Projects: \$1,000,000 to \$50,000,000.
- Broadband Adoption and Use Projects: \$100,000 to \$2,500,000.

These funding ranges are not required minimums and maximums, but Eligible Entities requesting funding for projects outside of these ranges must provide a reasonable explanation for the variance in their project size.

What is the Period of Performance for an award?

The period of performance for Broadband Use and Adoption projects and for Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects is up to four years; however, the Assistant Secretary may extend the period of performance beyond four years if certain conditions are met. See Section B of the NOFO for additional information pertaining to award amounts and to the period of performance for grants issued pursuant to the NOFO.

Is there a guaranteed funding amount for Tribal Governments?

To meet the equitable distribution requirement of the Act, NTIA will allocate up to \$500,000 to each of the Federally Recognized Tribes delineated by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs. With that, for a Tribal Government to receive this minimum allocation, the application must receive a passing merit score, and the Tribal Government must not have received funding in the first round, either as a lead applicant or member of a consortium to which they provided a Resolution of Consent, in accordance with Section B.3 of the NOFO. The \$500,000 allocation is not a funding cap for Federally Recognized Tribes, but rather is intended to ensure that program funding is equitably distributed by NTIA to all Eligible Entities.

Is there a cost share or match requirement?

No. The statute does not contain a cost sharing or matching funds requirement. NTIA will **not** require an Eligible Entity applying for a grant under the TBCP to provide a non-federal cost contribution or match. See Executive Summary, Section L, of the NOFO.

Who is eligible to apply?

Section 905(a)(8) of the Act, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 1705(a)(8), specifies the following entities as eligible to receive grants pursuant to the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program: (i) a Tribal Government; (ii) a Tribal College or University; (iii) the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian Education Programs; (iv) a Tribal organization; or (v) an Alaska Native Corporation. An Eligible Entity that is not a Tribal Government,

Corporation, or the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, may directly submit an application for grant funding pursuant to this program if it demonstrates that it has approval from the applicable Tribal Government through a Tribal Government resolution.

Consortium applications are also eligible but must be accompanied by Tribal Government resolutions from all participants.

What is the definition of a Tribal Government?

For the purposes of the TBCP, the term “Tribal Government” is defined as the governing body of any Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, Band, Nation, Pueblo, Village, Community, Component Band, or Component Reservation, individually recognized (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of the Act, pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

What is the definition of a tribal land?

For the purposes of the TBCP, the term “tribal land” means: (A) any land located within the boundaries of: (i) an Indian Reservation, Pueblo, or Rancheria; or (ii) a Former Reservation within Oklahoma; (B) any land not located within the exterior boundaries of an Indian reservation, Pueblo, or Rancheria, the title to which is held: (i) in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian; (ii) by an Indian Tribe, an individual Indian, subject to restriction against alienation under laws of the United States; or (iii) by a dependent Indian Community; (C) any land located within a region established pursuant to section 7(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1606(a)); (D) Hawaiian Home Lands, as defined in section 801 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4221); or (E) those areas or communities designated by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior that are near, adjacent, or contiguous to reservations where financial assistance and social service programs are provided to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Are those who applied to TBCP during the first round eligible to reapply?

Yes, those who applied during the first round may apply to the second round of TBCP. However, NTIA will prioritize funding for Eligible Entities who were funded for a standalone Planning, Engineering, Feasibility, and Sustainability project; those who received equitable distribution awards to purchase supplies and equipment under the first TBCP NOFO; and Standalone Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects from Eligible Entities, including consortium applications, that did not receive TBCP funding in the first round of funding.

Additionally, consortium applicants that previously applied for TBCP funding may apply. However, priority consideration will be given to those consortiums who apply with new Tribes who did not receive funding as part of a consortium application awarded in the first round of funding.

Can an eligible applicant be a part of multiple applications?

No. Applicants should take care to ensure they are either applying as a single entity, or as part of a single consortium application. Applicants may only be part of one application regardless of type. This requirement is consistent with 47 USC § 1705(e)(2)(C) limits an Eligible Entity to one single application submission for TBCP funding. If NTIA determines that an Eligible Entity is in multiple applications, this may significantly delay NTIA’s review of such applications and may result in NTIA removing that entity

from consideration for funding for both their individual application, and any consortium applications they are a party to.

For information on how to apply for both a Use and Adoption and Infrastructure Deployment project, consult the How to Apply section.

Are Engineering, Feasibility, and Sustainability projects eligible for funding during Round 2?

No. NTIA will not fund standalone infrastructure planning projects during this second round.

Can eligible applicants submit applications for segments of the same overall project?

No. All proposed projects submitted should be comprehensive and completely autonomous, therefore not reliant on a future adjacent project.

Technical Information

What does unserved mean in context of this NOFO?

Unserved, with respect to a household, means: (A) the household lacks access to Qualifying Broadband Service; and (B) no broadband provider has been selected to receive, or is otherwise receiving, federal or state funding subject to enforceable build out commitments to deploy qualifying broadband service in the specific area where the household is located by dates certain, even if such service is not yet available, provided that the federal or state agency providing the funding has not deemed the service provider to be in default of its buildout obligations under the applicable federal or state program.

What is Qualifying Broadband Service?

Qualifying Broadband Service means broadband service with: (i) a download speed of not less than 25 megabits per second; (ii) an upload speed of not less than 3 megabits per second; and (iii) a latency sufficient to support real time, interactive applications. For purposes of this program, NTIA will interpret the 25/3 standard to mean the ability to provide 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream simultaneously to every household in the eligible service area. NTIA will interpret latency to mean 95 percent or more of all peak period measurements of network round trip latency (i.e., the total round-trip latency between the customer premises and the closest designated Internet core peering interconnection point) are at or below 100 milliseconds.

How is an Enforceable Buildout Commitment defined in this program?

Enforceable Buildout Commitment means, in the context of the definition of unserved set forth in Section A.3.o of this NOFO, a legally binding agreement in which the Tribe provides a limited waiver of sovereign immunity in a Tribal Government Resolution or in the contract vehicle, between the Tribal Government in the proposed service area, or its authorized agent, and a service provider committing to deliver “qualifying broadband service” to unserved households on those Tribal Lands.

How to Apply

When does the application period open, and when is the deadline to apply?

The application period opened on July 27, 2023, and NTIA is accepting applications for the TBCP through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on January 23, 2024.

How do I apply via Grants.gov?

Applicants must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, a SAM Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, and Grants.gov account to apply for this grant.

Once all of these are obtained, you can apply to the TBCP opportunity on Grants.gov found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=349565>

If you wish to apply for a Use and Adoption project, please apply under the competition titled “Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program - Broadband Use and Adoption.”

If you wish to apply for an Infrastructure Deployment project or a dual Use and Adoption/Infrastructure Deployment project, please apply under the competition titled “Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program - Broadband Infrastructure Deployment OR Dual.”

How do I get a UEI number?

Applicants who are new to SAM.gov may register their entity or receive a UEI by signing in to SAM.gov and selecting “Get Started,” then “Register Entity.” If you are a sub-awardee who just needs a UEI for subaward reporting, choose “Get Unique Entity ID.”

How do I register in SAM?

All applicants must register in the SAM before submitting a complete application packet. Additionally, the applicant must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. Applicants can register for the SAM at <https://www.sam.gov/>.

Note that the free annual registration process in SAM.gov generally takes between three (3) and five (5) business days but can take more than three weeks. Please note that a Federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient’s registration in SAM.gov is not current at the time of the award.

How do I create a Grants.gov account?

Applicants can register an account with Grants.gov by following the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>. In addition, see Section D.10.a of the NOFO for additional information on navigating Grants.gov, including how to add a profile to a Grants.gov account, organization roles authorization and designation of the grant Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), how to track role requests, and AOR signature process, which is required for a complete application and is an often missed step.

How do I access the application?

Application forms and instructions are available on the Grants.gov website (www.grants.gov). To access these materials, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, select “How to Apply for Grants,” and then select “Search for Opportunity Package.” Enter the CFDA number (11.029) and/or the funding opportunity number (NTIA-TBC-TBCPO- 2023-2008098). Select “Grant Opportunity Package,” and then follow the prompts. To download the instructions, go to “Preview Opportunity Package” and select “Download Instructions.”

NTIA recommends that applicants visit Grants.gov prior to filing their applications so that they fully understand the process and requirements. Applications are accepted until the deadline and are processed as received. Late applications may not be accepted.

Can applicants use the Grants.gov Workspace to submit an application?

Yes. Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. Below is an overview of using Workspace when applying for Federal grants on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

In addition, see Section D.10.b of the NOFO for additional information on using Workspace to submit your application.

How do I submit an application?

Complete application packages may be submitted: (i) electronically through www.grants.gov; (ii) through electronic mail to broadbandusa@ntia.gov; or (iii) by postal mail or courier. NTIA prefers that applicants use Grants.gov to submit their applications; however, applicants must submit complete application packages using only one of these methods and may not submit partial or duplicate applications using multiple methods of transmission. See Section D, Application and Submission Information, of the NOFO.

Applications submitted online through the Grants.gov system must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on January 23, 2024. Applications submitted by electronic mail must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on January 23, 2024. Applications submitted by postal mail or by courier service must be postmarked (for postal mail) or show clear evidence of mailing (for courier submissions) no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on January 23, 2024, and be sent to:

National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 4878
Attn: Douglas Kinkoph, Associate Administrator
Washington, DC, 20230

Submission Requirements

What information is required in the application?

Please refer to Section D.2, Content and Form of Applications, of the NOFO for a detailed list of Standard Forms (SF) and related documentation required for submission. Items in Section D.2.a are standard forms for federal assistance that are required for both Broadband Use and Adoption Projects as well as for Broadband Infrastructure Projects. Items listed in Section D.2.b of the NOFO are additional items required for Broadband Use and Adoption Projects and items listed in Section D.2.c of the NOFO are additional items required for Broadband Infrastructure Projects. Section D.2.d of the NOFO lists other items that applicants may submit in support of their applications.

Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions at www.Grants.gov to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicates only that an application was transferred to a system. It does not provide details concerning whether all attachments (or

how many attachments) transferred successfully. Applicants will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a federal agency's electronic system has received its application.

How do applicants certify unserved areas to demonstrate need?

47 USC § 1705(c)(8) directs Eligible Entities to prioritize the construction of new broadband infrastructure proposals that will serve currently unserved households. NTIA will permit Tribes to self-certify the unserved status of proposed service areas within tribal lands, and lands providing services to tribal members, with a detailed description of how the Tribe determined that the area is unserved. As part of its self-certification, the Tribe should consult the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) National Broadband Map. If that map indicates that qualifying broadband service is available, but the Tribe disagrees, then the Tribe shall submit a formal challenge to the FCC using the challenge process for its National Broadband Map or indicates its participation in the state's submission for the FCC's challenge process and provide documentation to NTIA of the challenge(s) submitted.

If the Tribe is aware of the presence of facilities capable of delivering qualifying broadband service, e.g., fiber facilities or other broadband technology, deployed on their Tribal Lands, they must disclose this information to NTIA. The Tribe should also disclose whether it has an Enforceable Buildout Commitment as defined in Section A.3.k of the NOFO. Section D.2.c.v. of this NOFO contains more information about the required disclosures related to the self-certification process.

Application Evaluation

How will applications be reviewed/evaluated?

NTIA will conduct a three-stage review process to evaluate applications received under this grant program for an award, consisting of an Initial Administrative and Eligibility Review, Merit Review, and Programmatic Review.

NTIA will evaluate applications submitted by Eligible Entities against objective evaluation criteria to determine whether the proposal merits an award. Applications that score highly when evaluated against the objective evaluation criteria during the Merit Review will advance to the Programmatic Review. From this pool of applications, NTIA will select awardees based on the results of the Merit and Programmatic Reviews, and by applying the Selection Factors listed in this NOFO.

For specific selection factors for Use and Adoption Projects, please consult Section E.1 of the NOFO.

For specific selection factors for Infrastructure Deployment Projects, please consult Section E.2 of the NOFO.

What is the process for the Administrative and Eligibility Review?

NTIA will conduct an initial review of timely received applications submitted in response to the NOFO to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to the programmatic requirements of the TBCP, including a review of the project information form, executive summary, project narrative, detailed budget justification, budget narrative, and required federal forms. Applications submitted by anyone other than an Eligible Entity will be eliminated from further review. NTIA may continue the initial administrative review process for an application that is timely submitted by an Eligible Entity missing certain

documentation required by this NOFO and will request missing or incomplete information from the applicant as needed. The applicant will have seven (7) calendar days to submit materials responsive to the feedback provided by NTIA, unless this period is extended by NTIA.

Pursuant to section 905(e)(2)(B) of the Act, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 1705(e)(2)(B), an Eligible Entity's failure to remedy deficiencies in a timely manner may result in NTIA's denial of an application.

What is the Merit Review process?

Applications satisfying the Initial Administrative and Eligibility Review will be reviewed by at least two objective reviewers who have demonstrated expertise in the programmatic aspects of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. They may be federal employees or non-federal persons. Reviewers will evaluate applications according to the evaluation criteria provided in Section E.1 of this NOFO and independently score each application based on a scale of 0-100 points. Reviewers will evaluate applications for Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects and Broadband Use and Adoption projects submitted by the same applicant under the criteria applicable to each type of project and independently score each application based on a scale of 0-100 points.

In response to reviewer feedback, NTIA may seek additional clarifying information or corroborating documentation from an applicant during Merit Review and may suggest revisions be made to an application to resolve perceived material programmatic or financial weaknesses or deficiencies. In such cases, NTIA will review the feedback from the reviewers and will contact the applicant and provide the applicant with an opportunity to respond to the Merit Review feedback. The applicant will have fourteen (14) calendar days to respond to the reviewer feedback, unless this time period is extended by NTIA. Pursuant to subsection (e)(2)(B), an eligible applicant's failure to remedy application deficiencies in a timely and constructive manner may result in NTIA's denial of the application.

Based on an average of the reviewers' scores, applications will be assigned a rating of qualified for funding or unqualified for funding for each priority grouping, in accordance with the following scale:

Qualified for Funding – (70-100 points)

Unqualified for Funding – (0-69 points)

NTIA will not round up merit reviewer scores when determining whether an application is qualified for funding. NTIA may use its sole discretion to terminate the Merit Review revision process for an applicant if, after multiple opportunities to respond to Merit Review feedback, NTIA determines that the applicant is not sufficiently responding to requests for additional information or remedying application deficiencies.

What is the application evaluation criteria for the Merit Reviewers?

The evaluation criteria that will be used by the Merit Reviewers to review and analyze applications are grouped into three categories: (1) Project Purpose and Benefits (45 points); (2) Project Viability (30 points); and (3) Project Budget and Capacity Building/Sustainability (25 points). See Section E, Application Review and Information, of the NOFO for more details.

How will NTIA prioritize applications for review?

NTIA will prioritize and stage TBCP applications for Merit Review based on the following groupings:

1. Single application from DHHL on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community because of its unique status as the only applicant to whom the Act directed that a specific amount of TBCP funds be made available;
2. Standalone Broadband Use and Adoption projects from Eligible Entities, including consortium applications. NTIA anticipates making awards in this grouping in a total amount of not more than \$100 million. Within this category, NTIA will prioritize the review of Standalone Broadband Use and Adoption projects: (1) that propose digital equity planning activities; and/or (2) from Eligible Entities that did not receive an award in the first round of TBCP funding;
3. Standalone Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects submitted by recipients of awards for Planning, Engineering, Feasibility, and Sustainability projects during the first round of TBCP funding or those who received equitable distribution awards to purchase supplies and equipment under the first TBCP NOFO;
4. Standalone Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects from Eligible Entities, including consortium applications, that did not receive TBCP funding in the first round of funding;
5. Dual Broadband Infrastructure Deployment and Broadband Use and Adoption project applications from Eligible Entities, including consortium applications, that did not receive TBCP funding in the first round of funding. Note that NTIA will prioritize funding for the infrastructure deployment components of the application and will consider the broadband use and adoption components subject to the availability of TBCP funding. NTIA will not fund broadband use and adoption activities that are dependent upon the completion of the broadband infrastructure deployment components of the project;
6. Remaining applications from Federally Recognized Tribes eligible to receive the equitable allocation of up to \$500,000 if NTIA determines it is unable to fully fund the applicant's original request due to the availability of TBCP funding. Equitable distributions of up to \$500,000 will be awarded only to Tribal Governments that have not previously received a TBCP award (which includes equitable distribution awards) in the first round of funding from the TBCP. For consortium or regional applications that include Tribal Governments, equitable distribution amounts of up to \$500,000 per participating Tribal Government (that have not previously received a TBCP award) within the consortium would be awarded to the consortium's lead applicant on behalf of the eligible participating Tribal Governments. Lead consortium applicants that previously received TBCP funding may apply with a consortium composed of new Tribes that did not receive funding as part of a consortium application awarded in the first round of funding; and
7. If TBCP funding remains available, NTIA will then consider applications for Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects from Eligible Entities, including consortium applications, that received awards in the first round of TBCP funding and applied in the second round for TBCP funding for additional project activities; provided, that they have successfully completed their first-round projects or are on track to do so.

What is NTIA's Programmatic Review process?

NTIA Program Staff will review applications determined to be qualified for funding during the Merit Review process for conformity with programmatic objectives, requirements, and priorities. During Programmatic Review, NTIA may ask applicants to submit additional information, as appropriate, to clarify or to further substantiate the representations made in their applications. Applicants will have ten (10) calendar days to submit information responsive to the feedback provided by NTIA, unless this time period is extended by NTIA. NTIA Program Staff will review the supplemental information, along with

all information submitted with the application, to confirm eligibility and evaluate the applications with respect to the requirements and priorities of the TBCP.

Pursuant to 47 USC § 1705(c)(2), NTIA will consult with the FCC and USDA to prevent duplication of funding. NTIA will permit Tribes to self-certify the Unserved status of proposed service areas within Tribal Lands, and lands providing services to Tribal members, with a description of how the Tribe determined that the area is Unserved. NTIA will conduct an analysis to validate that an area is unserved. This analysis will include, but not be limited to, a review of the National Broadband Map, broadband funding data available to NTIA from federal and state agencies and through the FCC's Broadband Funding Map, and direct coordination with relevant federal and state agencies to identify and resolve potentially duplicative funding. If NTIA determines that duplication exists, NTIA may, at its option, negotiate with an applicant to descope the application to avoid duplicative funding prior to selecting an application for award. NTIA will conduct a final deduplication review of the potential grantees' proposed project service areas prior to award to account for any lag time between the initial review for duplication and the date the award is issued. In addition, NTIA will impose a specific award condition to allow for a descope of the project as needed post-award.

Applicants whose supporting documents are not complete, accurate and timely submitted or who do not adequately substantiate the representations in their applications may be denied.

NTIA reserves the right at any time during the Merit and Programmatic Review processes to negotiate with the applicant relative to specific modifications to the application, including but not limited to the resolution of any differences that may exist between the applicant's original request and NTIA's determination of eligible service areas and eligible costs. Upon completion of the Programmatic Review, NTIA Program Staff will summarize their analysis for each application reviewed.

What is the process and factors for award?

The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, or their designee, will serve as the Selecting Official for the TBCP.

The Associate Administrator for the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth (OICG Associate Administrator) will prepare and present a package or packages of recommended grant awards to the Selecting Official for review and approval. The OICG Associate Administrator's recommendations will consider the following selection factors:

1. The scores and technical comments of the objective expert reviewers during Merit Review;
2. The analysis of NTIA Program Staff during Programmatic Review;
3. Satisfaction of the statutory purposes and the overall goals and objectives of the TBCP;
4. Whether, and the extent to which, the applicant proposes to incorporate strong labor protections, consistent with Tribal law, into the performance of the construction project, including paying prevailing wages;
5. Whether, and the extent to which the infrastructure investment is necessary to provide qualifying broadband service in the proposed service area and is unlikely to be made using private sources of funds;

6. The extent to which the infrastructure investment is necessary to provide Qualifying Broadband Service in the proposed service area and is unlikely to be made using private sources of funds;
7. Whether an applicant has previously received TBCP funding;
8. Avoidance of duplication with the initiatives of other federal agencies, including U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) loan and grant programs for broadband services and applicable universal service programs authorized by the FCC;
9. The geographic distribution of the proposed awards; and
10. The availability of funds and the equitable distribution of funds as required by section 905(c)(3)(A) of the Act.

The Assistant Secretary will generally select and recommend applications for funding based on the recommendations from the OICG Associate Administrator. As the Selecting Official, the Assistant Secretary retains discretion to select and recommend an application for funding that was not recommended by the OICG Associate Administrator based on one of the selection factors enumerated above and/or not to select an application that was recommended for funding by the Associate Administrator. The Assistant Secretary will submit the applications recommended for funding, along with the bases for the selection decisions, to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Grants Officer, who serves as the Grants Officer for the TBCP. The final approval of selected applications and the issuance of awards will be made by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NOAA Grants Officer are final.

When will awards be made or announced?

Awards will be made on a rolling basis subject to the availability of funds. NTIA expects the earliest start date for awards under this NOFO to be May 6, 2024.

How will applicants be notified if not selected for an award?

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail and will have the opportunity to receive a debriefing after the opportunity is officially closed. Applicants must submit a written request within 10 business days of the email notification to receive a debriefing from NTIA. NTIA will then work with the unsuccessful applicant to arrange a date and time for the debriefing.